

## Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

**Project Name:** *Sustaining New Bedford Plan*

- **Year Complete:** 2017
- **Local Government:** City of New Bedford, MA
- **Local Foundation:** Island Foundation, Rainy Day Fund, Upstream Foundation

### **Project Purpose**

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To promote advancing food security in New Bedford.

### **Key Lessons Learned**

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*Lessons learned about tools and tactics through the project that other sustainability directors could use to advance their work.*

City of New Bedford staff highlighted the importance of figuring out how to get the properties that had been turned over to the City into the correct tax status category. Many of these properties were still “tax title” properties, meaning that the City was liable for activities that occur on them. To make them more available as community gardens, the project team focused on moving these properties into a “use at your own risk” status and placed under the control of the Board of Park Commissioners as recreational spaces. This effort required legal review by the Solicitor’s and Treasurer’s offices, and a vote by the Board of Park Commissioners to approve the status change. Involvement by the City Council Property Committee was also needed.

*Lessons for developing a collaborative process between a local government sustainability director and local place-based foundation(s).*

Overall, the P4P grant process was an extremely effective tool and incentive to develop a collaborative process and closer relationships. The leverage, visibility, and publicity offered by the P4P program was attractive to both the City and Island Foundation, and the collaborative process has been very rewarding.

### **Additional Information and Resources**

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New Bedford now has 27 community gardens in their area. Read more about the continued success of Mass in Motion in the city [here](#).